



FORUM

Facts, Outcomes, & Research... Useful for Managing

CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY IN FELONS WITH JAIL SENTENCES

BY KERI-ANNE JETZER

Offenders who have received prison sentences in Washington State receive a barrage of assessments upon entry into the institution, including a chemical dependency (CD) screen. Due to this process, fair amounts of information are known about prison inmates, including how many are presumed to be chemically dependent. There is no such standardized screening for offenders receiving jail sentences. Only estimates can be made about the pervasiveness of chemical dependency among offenders who received felony sentences but do not go to prison.

Two types of data have been used to estimate chemical dependency prevalence in felons with jail sentences: national statistics on jail arrestees and state prison data. In 2000,

national data on convicted jail inmates shows over half had used drugs regularly, which is defined by the Bureau of Justice Statistics as once per week for at least one month. In

1989, 58 percent reported regular drug use, which increased to 64.2 percent by 1996.

The federal Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring program retrieves quarterly data on booked arrestees from Spokane and Seattle as part of its national report on drug abuse. For the quarters in Fiscal Year 1999, Spokane ranged from 59.0-66.3 percent of booked arrestees producing positive drug tests. Seattle arrestees with positive drug tests ranged from 63.3-71.5 percent. In both cities, females averaged more positive drug tests than males. In Seattle, older females were more likely to produce positive tests, while males remained constant regardless of age.

Data on Washington State's prison population has previously been used to estimate overall felony offender chemical dependency prevalence for the state. Chemical dependency screening data on Fiscal Year 2000 admissions were analyzed. Of offenders who received a chemical dependency screening within six months of admission,

Chart 1
FY02 Prison Admissions

	CD		Not CD		Total
	#	%	#	%	n=2003
Sex					
Males	1,351	86%	226	14%	1,577
Females	355	83%	71	17%	426
Race					
White*	1,214	87%	188	13%	1,402
Black	375	81%	90	19%	465
Other	117	86%	19	14%	136
Age					
> 18	27	48%	29	52%	56
18-24	327	84%	63	16%	390
25-34	644	87%	93	13%	737
35+	708	86%	112	14%	820
Crime					
Person	223	78%	62	22%	285
Property & Other	507	89%	62	11%	569
Drug	824	84%	160	16%	984
Unknown**	152	92%	13	8%	165

*Includes White with Hispanic origin

**Community custody violators



FOR YOUR INFORMATION..

BOOK/PUBLICATION OF THE MONTH

Fighting crime by treating substance abuse - By Steven Belenko and Jordon Peugh. This article addresses the value, in both economic and social terms, to society by treating drug problems while in offenders are still in prison. Available in the Planning and Research library, or we can email a copy to you. Please see the contact section of this Forum issue.

WEB SITE OF THE MONTH

<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/dasa/services/research/factsheets.shtml>. On this DASA web site, look for the article titled "Chemical Dependency Treatment Reduces Crime in Washington State".

DEFINITION OF THE MONTH

Spuriousness: A condition in which two variables vary together, but are not causally related. Both may be influenced by a third variable. Example: in may be found that children who eat more ice cream are less likely to be delinquents. Rather than concluding that ice cream consumption reduces delinquent behavior, it may be that both behaviors are a function of a third variable, income.

DOC MONTHLY STATISTICS AS OF NOVEMBER 30, 2003

CONFINEMENT POPULATION 16,478

Total Confinement 15,568

Work Release 674

Out of State Rented Beds 236

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS POPULATION

ACTIVE SUPERVISION 33,704

RMA 7,094

RMB 6,103

RMC 10,843

RMD 6,154

Unclassified 3,510

MONETARY 35,140

INACTIVE 25,316

ESCAPES FROM SECURITY LEVELS 2-5, FOR FY04

	Date	Type	Return
Stafford Creek	08/29/03	Facility	08/29/03
Ahtanum View	09/01/03	Facility	09/08/03
TPR	10/29/03	Off-Site	N/A
MCC-TRU	11/01/03	Facility	11/09/03

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P&R Homepage, under Data and Research on the DOCNET homepage

85 percent were presumed to be chemically dependent (Chart 1). In the case of the prison population, it appears that males are more likely to be chemically dependent than females.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 - CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY